Some REASONS *humbly offered for laying a Duty upon* Wrought Silks.

THE Wrought Silks imported in each Year, according to a reaſonable Computation, do amount to 300000 *l.* in Value; the Duty whereof, according to the preſent Rates, will come to about 70000 *l. per Ann.* of which Duty for five Years laſt paſt (computing one Year with another) there hath not been paid into the Cuſtom-Houſe more than 10000 *l. per Ann.* as will appear by their Books: So that, according to this Computation, it doth plainly appear Her Majeſty hath been defrauded in Her Cuſtoms of 60000 *l. per Ann.* or thereabouts; therefore it may reaſonably be ſuppoſed, that the Oppoſition made to the Methods now offered, to prevent ſuch clandeſtine Practices, doth proceed from ſome Perſons, who, for By-Ends, are unwilling to have that clandeſtine Trade prevented.

In Caſe the Additional Duty to be laid upon all Wrought Silks imported, together with the Method taken for ſecuring the ſame, ſhould leſſen the Importation thereof, there will be the greater Quantity of raw and thrown Silk imported, for which not only Cuſtom will be paid, but our Woollen Manufactures will be barter'd away for the ſame, which will be the greater Conſumption of our Woollen Manufactures, and employ great Numbers of the Poor; and the low Duty laid on the Silks which is manufactured at Home, will enable the Trader to ſell his Commodity Three Pence in the Shilling cheaper than the Importer, by which Means thoſe Silks will be all manufactured at Home, which uſed to be imported, and thereby employ great Numbers of our own Subjects, which are now ready to ſtarve for want of Employment.

The Methods intended for ſecuring the Cuſtoms to be paid for all Foreign Wrought Silks imported, will make thoſe who deal in Goods (for which Cuſtom hath not been paid) lie under ſo great Difficulties, that they will be very much expos'd, and always liable to have ſuch Goods ſeized, beſides their being ſubject to a Penalty: Whereas, at this time, when ſuch Goods are brought aſhore, and lodged in the Trader's Shop, it cannot be diſtinguiſh'd whether the Cuſtom is paid or not.

The Manner of laying this Duty will neither prove troubleſome nor detrimental to the Traders Goods, as is objected, by reaſon the greateſt Part of the Goods will be rated according to Weight, and ſealed without opening them at all; and for the reſt, they will be but once opened; for after the Stock in Hand is rated, it will ever afterwards be meaſured and weighed in the Weavers Cuſtody.

The Duty now propoſed to be laid cannot affect our Exportation to Foreign Markets, becauſe there will be a Drawback of the whole new Duty upon Exportation, of ſuch Goods as are manufactured at Home.

As to the Objection, That the Lot of every Trader, or Dealer in the Silks manufactured will be Trouble and Perplexity, by reaſon of the Officers ſearching for imported Goods, for which no Cuſtoms have been paid: That is no Objection, becauſe a Cuſtom-Houſe Officer, by the Laws now in being, may ſearch any Traders, or private Houſe, for ſuch Goods, if there be any Information given that any ſuch Goods are there. And there is no Reaſon to imagine, that the Officers employed in this Duty will be allowed to be more troubleſome in ſearching than the Officers of the Cuſtom-Houſe are.

As to the Objection of the Seal being torn off, or loſt by Accident, after the Duty is paid, and their Goods may thereby be liable to Confiſcation: This Inconveniency may be eaſily provided againſt, by new ſealing them, in caſe they can upon Oath make it appear the Duty has been paid, and the Seal loſt, or torn off by Accident.

SOME
REASONS
For laying a Duty upon
Wrought Silks,
Humbly offered
By *C. BOIT.*